



The Point Implementation

Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia

The Point is an online information repository and self-service application that allows faculty and staff at the University System of Georgia's (USG) 31 institutions and the Georgia Public Library System to access data for making more informed decisions when purchasing software. It provides real-time access to information about vendors, cost-saving possibilities, licensing options and software training. No other state college system or individual institution in the nation has a comprehensive solution that matches The Point's capabilities.

About the Situation

Colleges and universities are more likely to make uninformed decisions when purchasing software if they are unable to find valid information about existing contracts and previous experience with software products. USG's Information Technology Services manages more than 50 system-wide contracts to ensure predictable, value-based pricing. However, faculty and staff often did not know what contracts were available, what software USG already owned, what purchases were being considered or what software training was available. In addition, USG lacked a comprehensive and effective way for faculty and staff to contribute to the development of the terms and conditions of the contracts they use.

Innovative Solution

Following a series of onsite meetings at USG institutions with faculty and staff, university system leaders decided to develop a centralized, self-service information repository to organize, index and provide easy access to information. The resulting repository – called The Point – could also help faculty and staff better understand the value and cost savings that can be achieved through enterprise contracts.

The Point includes five applications: Opportunity, Vendor Contracts, Campus Contacts, USG Teams, and Requests. Each application provides “quick view” summary information and the capability to drill down for detailed, real-time data. The applications allow users to:

- Search for information about vendors and system-wide contracts
- Review agreements currently under consideration
- Maintain contracts
- Ensure review team engagement in selecting software
- Create and respond to requests
- Provide input about their software needs

By acting as a single enterprise, as opposed to 31 independent institutions, USG is realizing substantial cost savings. An agreement for one software suite alone has saved \$10 million based on academic pricing and \$38 million over “big box vendor” pricing. As an added bonus, the number of licenses is unlimited.

Transparency and collaboration are fundamental to The Point's innovative approach. It provides all faculty and staff with an easy-to-use tool to engage in the negotiation process, and it's used before, during and after vendor agreements are in place. By helping faculty and staff obtain the best software tools available, The Point ultimately enables better service to students and contributes to increasing opportunities for higher quality education.